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United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

During the reporting period from August 2000 to July 2001, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific continued to promote disarmament and security through the following disarmament meetings it organized: a conference on "Disarmament and the United Nations in the Twenty-first Century: Strategy and Action", held in Akita, Japan, from 22 to 25 August 2000; a meeting on "Prospects for further confidence-building", held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 9 to 11 March 2001; and a meeting on the theme "*Ka hao te rangatahi*: A Pacific Way to Disarmament", held in Wellington, New Zealand, from 27 to 30 March 2001.

Pursuant to the request of the General Assembly contained in its resolutions 52/38 S, 53/77 A and 55/33 W, the Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in the drafting of a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia by organizing a series of informal consultations with a view to resolving the remaining issues.

Pursuant to the request of the General Assembly contained in its resolutions 53/77 D and 55/33 S, the Centre continued to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen the country's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status.

* A/56/150.

** This report contains the outcome of the Secretary-General's consultations on the possibility of enabling the Centre to operate effectively from Kathmandu, concluded by 31 July 2001, pursuant to the request of the General Assembly contained in its resolution 55/34 H.

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Consultations on the relocation of the Centre continued with the host country and concerned Member States. In March 2001, an appropriate building to house the Centre in Kathmandu was identified by the Government of Nepal in cooperation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat. Subsequently, a draft host country agreement and a draft memorandum of understanding on the costs to be provided by Nepal were prepared by the Department and forwarded to the Government of Nepal for consideration. The host Government and the Department for Disarmament Affairs are in the process of finalizing the host country agreement and the memorandum of understanding so as to expedite the relocating of the Centre to Kathmandu.

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I. Introduction

1. On 20 November 2000, the General Assembly adopted resolution 55/34 H entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific", paragraphs 5, 7 and 8 of which read as follows:

> "The General Assembly,
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> "...
>
> "5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, taking note of paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 49/76 D of 15 December 1994, to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary support, within existing resources, in carrying out its programme of activities;
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> "...
>
> "7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to expedite his ongoing consultations with other concerned Member States and interested organizations, and urges him to conclude them by 31 July 2001 to assess the possibility of enabling the Centre to operate effectively from Kathmandu as soon as possible;
>
> "8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session on the implementation of the present resolution."

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request. It is also submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 55/34 F of 20 November 2000, entitled "United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament", by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide all necessary support, within existing resources, to the regional centres in carrying out their programmes of activities. The report covers the period from August 2000 to July 2001.

II. Activities of the Centre from August 2000 to July 2001

3. The Secretary-General continues to believe that the mandate of the Regional Centre remains valid and that the Centre could be a useful instrument for fostering a climate of cooperation and disarmament in the region. Consultations carried out by the Director of the Centre with Member States and academic institutes within and outside the region, as well as meetings organized by the Centre, have confirmed the strong support for the Centre's role in encouraging regional and subregional dialogue for the enhancement of openness, transparency and confidence-building and the promotion of disarmament and security. In this connection, the regional meetings organized by the Centre have been highly valued and commended by the General Assembly and the Asia and Pacific community.

4. In line with this approach and within the limited financial resources received as voluntary contributions from Member States and other interested organizations during the reporting period, the Centre organized the following meetings: three regional disarmament meetings held, respectively, in Akita, Japan, Kathmandu, Nepal, and Wellington, New Zealand.

5. From 22 to 25 August 2000, the United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues on the theme "Disarmament and the United Nations in the Twenty-first Century: Strategy and Action" was held in Akita, Japan. The Conference, organized in close cooperation with the Government of Japan and Akita City, was attended by 60 participants representing Governments, research institutes, the media and non-governmental organizations. To promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia and Pacific region at the dawn of the new millennium, the Conference provided the Asia-Pacific community with an opportunity to hold a dialogue on key issues in the field of security and disarmament. The Akita Conference considered, inter alia, strategies for peace and security in Asia and the Pacific, the role of the United Nations in the region, the regional approach to disarmament and peace, the Korean peninsula, the outcomes of and follow-up to the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, including its impact on the Conference on Disarmament, the role of the nuclear-weapon States in the region, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) process and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

6. The second meeting organized by the Centre was the thirteenth regional disarmament meeting in Asia and the Pacific, on the theme "Prospects for further confidence-building", held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 9 to 11 March 2001. Some 40 participants representing Governments, research institutes and non-governmental organizations mainly within the Asia-Pacific region, attended the meeting.

7. The Kathmandu meeting focused on an overview of security environment and prospects for further confidence-building in the subregions of Asia and the Pacific. The Korean peninsula, including the activities of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), featured prominently in the debate. The meeting also addressed denuclearization and non-proliferation in the region, emerging issues such as organized crime and terrorism, information technology and national security and disarmament and environment.

8. The regional dialogue promoted by the Centre through the organization of annual meetings in the Asia and Pacific region and other means has come to be known as the "Kathmandu process", as reflected in relevant General Assembly resolutions. The continuation of this process as a means of identifying pressing disarmament and security-related issues relevant to the region and encouraging region-oriented initiatives has gained the strong support of Member States and academic groups within the region. Strong support has also been expressed for the further development of a network, linking the Centre and its interlocutors within the region, as a way of exchanging data and information and exploring collaboration for joint activities related to disarmament and security. The Secretary-General intends to effectively use the Centre as a vehicle for the development of a practice of region-wide security and disarmament dialogue, and he is gratified by the continued political and financial support given to it in the region.

9. In 1996, recognizing the importance of the "Kathmandu process", the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), an organization of academic and research institutes in Asia and the Pacific, granted observer status to the Centre by amending its charter. Since then, the Centre and CSCAP have been jointly addressing disarmament and security concerns within the region. The Centre has explored and enhanced mutual cooperation with existing regional organizations (the Association of South-East Asian Nations, the Pacific Islands Forum and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation), other academic institutes and non-governmental organizations in the Asia-Pacific region.

10. The third meeting organized by the Centre on the theme "*Ka hao te rangatahi*: A Pacific Way to Disarmament", was held in Wellington, New Zealand, from 27 to 30 March 2001. The meeting, organized in close cooperation with the Government of New Zealand, examined security and disarmament concerns as they related specifically to the region, such as the politico/security environment at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the implementation of and follow-up to the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and nuclear-weapon-free zones. The issue of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons within the South Pacific region was also addressed. The discussions of this subject were considered helpful for the South Pacific States in preparing their contribution to the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held from 9 to 20 July 2001 in New York. In cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), a workshop was also held on strengthening disarmament-related norms and existing conventions and regimes within the South Pacific.

11. As in the past, the proceedings of the above-mentioned meetings will be published by the Centre.

12. Pursuant to the request of the General Assembly contained in its resolutions 52/38 S, 53/77 A and 55/33 W, the Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in the drafting of a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. During the reporting period, the Centre held a series of informal consultations with the five Central Asian States with a view to resolving the remaining issues.

13. In addition, pursuant to the request by the General Assembly contained in its resolutions 53/77 D and 55/33 S on Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status, the Centre continued to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to implement the relevant resolutions. On 27 October 2000, China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America issued their joint statement on security assurances in connection with Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status (A/55/530-S/2000/1052). At the request of Mongolia, the Centre intends to host a United Nations-sponsored expert group meeting in Sapporo, Japan, in September 2001, to consider ways and means of further strengthening Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status.

14. As a concrete means of promoting cooperation between the Centre and its constituents, the Centre provided technical and substantive services to the United Nations Association of Japan for its organization of the seventh Kanazawa Symposium on North-East Asia, held from 6 to 8 June 2001, on the theme "The Kanazawa process as a community-building measure". The Director of the Centre attended the Symposium and chaired the plenary sessions.

III. Relocating the Regional Centre to Kathmandu

15. By resolution 55/34 H, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to expedite his ongoing consultations with other concerned Member States and interested organizations, and urged him to conclude them by 31 July 2001 to assess the possibility of enabling the Centre to operate effectively from Kathmandu as soon as possible. Pursuant to that request, intensified consultations by the Secretariat with all concerned have yielded the following positive outcomes. During his visit to the country in March 2001, the Secretary-General discussed the issue of relocating the Regional Centre with the host Government and he was assured that an appropriate building in Kathmandu to house the Regional Centre had been identified in cooperation with a representative of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, and that Nepal was committed to hosting the Centre in Kathmandu as soon as possible. Subsequently, a draft host country agreement and a draft memorandum of understanding on the costs to be provided by the host Government were prepared by the Department for Disarmament Affairs and forwarded to the Nepalese authorities for consideration. In his address to the Parliament in June 2001, His Majesty the King said that the Government would speedily work towards relocating the Regional Centre to Kathmandu. In this connection, the Department for Disarmament Affairs was informed by the host Government that, in conformity with Nepal's long-standing commitment to host the Regional Centre in Kathmandu, the Government had decided on 2 July 2001 to bear the annual operational costs of the Centre, once the Centre has been physically moved to Kathmandu. The host Government and the Department for Disarmament Affairs are in the process of finalizing the host country agreement and the memorandum of understanding so as to expedite the relocating of the Centre to Kathmandu. It remains the wish of the Secretary-General to relocate the Regional Centre to Kathmandu as soon as possible.

IV. Staffing and financing

16. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/39 D of 30 November 1987, the Centre was established "on the basis of existing resources and of voluntary contributions that Member States and interested organizations may make to that end".

17. During the reporting period from August 2000 to July 2001, voluntary contributions in the amount of $26,000 were received. In addition, a number of Governments and organizations contributed to the work of the Centre by hosting conferences and absorbing a major portion of the costs. In this respect, the Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation to: Akita City in Japan for the cost of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues held in Akita in August 2000; Rissho-Kosei-Kai, a Japanese non-governmental organization, for the cost of the Kathmandu meeting in March 2001; and the Government of New Zealand for the cost of the Wellington meeting held in March 2001.

18. The Secretary-General also wishes to express his gratitude to the Governments of India, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea and Thailand for their contributions, and to the Government of Nepal for its overall support of the Centre. While appreciating the contributions received, the Secretary-General appeals to Member States and other interested organizations to continue to make voluntary contributions to the Centre in order to ensure its viability and enhance its effective functioning, including the continuation of the "Kathmandu process". The status of the Trust Fund for the Centre covering the year 2000 appears in the annex to the present report.

Annex

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific covering the year 2000

	United States dollars
I. Fund balance, 31 December 1999	320 540
II. Income, 1 January-31 December 2000	
Voluntary contributions*	28 000
Interest income	20 787
Miscellaneous income	3 513
Subtotal	**52 300**
III. Expenditures	
1 January-31 December 2000	150 729
Subtotal	**150 729**
IV. Fund balance, 31 December 2000	222 111

Note: This information is based on the financial statement for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2000. During the period from 1 January to 30 June 2001, additional contributions totalling $11,000 were received from India ($10,000) and Mongolia ($1,000).

* 2000: New Zealand ($10,000), Republic of Korea ($15,000) and Thailand ($3,000).